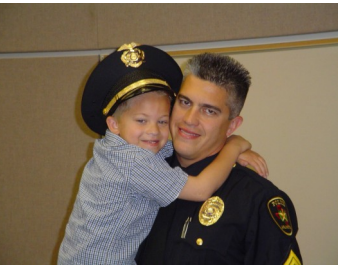


Goal IV: Ensure access to quality services and public facilities.

- Objective 1  
Ensure all City facilities are properly maintained and accessible to neighborhoods
- Objective 2  
Promote innovative service development and delivery for neighborhoods
- Objective 3  
Maximize use of public facilities for neighborhood meetings

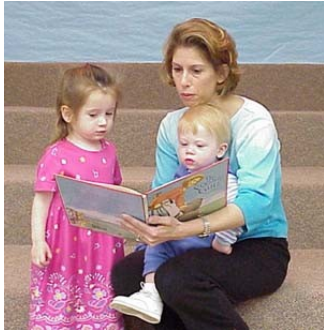


Arlington's public safety and infrastructure, as well as its libraries, parks and recreation centers, play a critical role for the quality of life of neighborhoods. Goal 4 focuses on ensuring access to quality services that make Arlington neighborhoods safer and more attractive, as well as access to quality public facilities that provide residents with learning and recreational opportunities and a place to gather as a community.

Families rely on City libraries, parks and recreational facilities to learn, play and congregate for family celebrations and neighborhood gatherings. The focus of Objective 1 is to make sure these facilities are properly maintained and easily accessible. Upkeep of facilities is necessary so they continue to be safe and address the needs of neighborhoods. Equally important is ensuring accessibility, in terms of location, hours of operation and affordability. Busy families want to have a large community park nearby as well as green open space closer to home. And they want to be able to enjoy these and other facilities during convenient hours in the evenings and on the weekends, and, if necessary, be able to pay reasonable fees for their use.

Fostering innovative thinking in developing and delivering services is the focus of Objective 2. Constantly searching for better ways to get the job done is critical in keeping pace with the changing needs and demands of neighborhoods. Identifying means to deliver programs more efficiently and economically improves quality of service as well as stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

A place for neighborhood organizations to gather is critical for community development. Neighborhood organizations need a place that provides them a space for gatherings, ranging from homeowner association meetings to forums and social events. City facilities not only provide a space for these gatherings, but also a sense of place and belonging in the community. Objective 3 focuses not only on maximizing the use of public facilities for these purposes, but also identifying community assets that can meet these needs.



This Strategy is an outgrowth of organization and community work on the following City Council outcomes and priorities:

- Arlington is a place where people feel safe anywhere, all the time.
- Neighborhoods are reinvigorated.
- Enforcement of property maintenance, health, and animal code fosters healthy and attractive neighborhoods.
- Quality parks, facilities, and green spaces increase the attractiveness and desirability of Arlington.

Strong, Safe and Attractive Neighborhoods

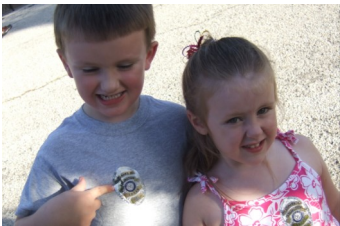
Introduction

The emerging focus of municipal government on neighborhoods as the strategy for community improvement invites new thinking and poses new challenges. Specifically, it demands the engagement of citizens at a level that requires methods different from the past. Successful City-sponsored neighborhood initiatives are shaped locally to respond to the needs of populations and to assure that communities have a genuine sense of ownership.

Among the most important early tasks in developing the initiative is clarity about the scope of work that needs attention and the role the City will play. The reality is that there is not enough fiscal capital or other resources to eradicate every ill or address every worthy cause. Therefore, it is critical to develop a framework to guide community efforts. The goals set forth in the Neighborhood Strategy will be the language that staff and stakeholders will use when they talk to potential investors, community-based organizations and the media about the efforts of the City's neighborhood initiatives. The challenge to staff is to develop an action strategy for neighborhoods that will serve to further enhance the quality of life in Arlington's neighborhoods and encourage partnerships. Focusing on both internal and external existing opportunities, resources and programs, draft



goals and objectives were developed. They were presented to management, strengthened to reflect the overall mission of the organization, presented to a focus group of key neighborhood leaders and further defined as a result of their input. This process coupled with the City's current citywide neighborhood initiatives resulted in the development of the Neighborhood Strategy. The Neighborhood Strategy outlines the following goals and objectives necessary for achieving the Council's vision of "strong, safe and attractive neighborhoods."



For More Information Contact

Gilbert Perales

Deputy City Manager for Neighborhood Services

City of Arlington, Texas

(817) 459-6100

[gilbert.perales@arlingtontx.gov](mailto:gilbert.perales@arlingtontx.gov)



## Goal I: Enhance community partnerships that invigorate neighborhoods, capitalize on their assets and create a safer community.

### Objective 1

**Increase the number and sustainability of Neighborhood organizations**

### Objective 2

**Leverage alliances and partnerships to achieve a safer community**

### Objective 3

**Encourage collaboration among neighborhood organizations to meet their goals**

At the heart of all strategies to reinvigorate Arlington's neighborhoods are people — the youth and adults who reside in neighborhoods, businesses, non-profit and religious organizations, and City staff who are committed to working together to make Arlington better. These partnerships are critical in invigorating neighborhoods and ensuring their viability for years to come.

**Objective 1** Increase the number of Neighborhood organizations, as well as enhance and revitalize existing organizations. This effort includes community building and networking to increase neighborhood sustainability. Neighborhood and community groups such as ACTION North, Southwest Action Team of Arlington, and Heart of Arlington Neighborhood Association provide the essential grassroots efforts to affect positive change and sustain successes in the community. City staff provides support — by

facilitating, providing information, maintaining open lines of communication and participating in community events. But, it is the community groups and neighborhood organizations that are the driving force in strengthening neighborhoods and expanding capacity in the long term.

Neighbors who know each other and interact with one another are key components in creating safer and stronger neighborhoods. The term "neighbor" is inclusive of residents, schools, businesses, non-profits and faith-based groups with a vested interest in a neighborhood.

**Objective 2** Encourage stakeholders to form alliances to work toward helping to reduce crime and the opportunity for crime in their neighborhoods. Events and opportunities such as National Night Out, neighborhood matching grants, block parties and local

Community Watch organizations serve as opportunities for neighbors to meet, get to know each other and take the first steps in forming alliances that can be leveraged to achieve a safer community.

Community alliances are also critical in achieving other common goals, which is the focus of **Objective 3**. Neighborhood organizations, especially those with limited resources, can more effectively attain their goals by working with each other, as well as other community stakeholders, rather than alone. Collaboration can range from sharing ideas to sharing resources between neighborhood organizations.

While collaboration is the cornerstone in increasing neighborhood sustainability, financial resources also play a role.

## Goal II: Facilitate the creation of Neighborhood Action Strategies that develop solutions to neighborhood issues.

**Objective 1** Select pilot Neighborhoods and develop action plans and strategies

**Objective 2** Expand civic leadership training and volunteer opportunities

**Objective 3** Explore more effective City service delivery

**Objective 4** Leverage Neighborhood and City resources

Stakeholders with a valued interest in Arlington live, go to school, work, own a business or conduct business in Arlington or visit our city. By encouraging these stakeholders to undertake a more active role in building stronger neighborhoods, they can initiate and sustain positive changes in the community.

**Objective 1** Facilitate the development of neighborhood action plans. The plans would identify the neighborhood vision and identify assets and needs as part of a long term action strategy. The four National League of Cities Building Equitable Communities designated neighborhoods would be selected for our first efforts with other neighborhoods to follow. We want to develop solutions to neighborhood issues and support community efforts. These plans would be presented to Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council for incorporating into the

comprehensive plan.

**Objective 2** Expand opportunities for stakeholders to learn and hone leadership skills to ensure sustainable neighborhoods is critical to foster a sense of civic responsibility among neighbors and, more importantly, nurture young leaders who will succeed them and ensure continuity in civic leadership. The City's Neighborhood Academy, Code Rangers, Community Watch, Citizens on Patrol, the Citizen Fire Academy and the Citizen Police Academy offer excellent training ground for civic leadership.

**Objective 3** Explore opportunities for process improvements for more effective delivery of City services. Creating appreciation for stakeholders to communicate regularly with each other and with City staff is key. This is particularly important in reaching out to and engaging diverse groups in the

community, particularly those who speak various languages. The East Arlington Pilot Project brought several City departments together in a cooperative effort to share bilingual (English and Spanish) information with residents in a concentrated area, build rapport, and encourage civic participation through face-to-face meetings with City staff and among neighbors.

**Objective 4** focuses on building existing resources and pursuing grant opportunities for enhancing neighborhoods. By partnering with businesses, schools, faith-based groups and non-profit groups, neighborhood organizations can assemble some of the funding support necessary to carry out their initiatives. And through civic education, such as the City's Neighborhood Academy, neighborhood leaders can learn of funding opportunities and how to connect with resources to help them initiate positive activities in their neighborhoods.

## Goal III: Implement neighborhood strategies that grow the economic, social and cultural vitality of our diverse neighborhoods.

### Objective 1

**Implement neighborhood priorities**

### Objective 2

**Seize opportunities in neighborhoods**

### Objective 3

**Celebrate the arts, culture, and rich diversity of our neighborhoods**

Arlington's economic, social and cultural vitality and its diversity are its most valuable assets. **Goal 3** focuses on implementing actions and projects that reflect neighborhood priorities in growing these assets.

**Objective 1** Implement neighborhood action plans. Leadership of neighborhood organizations is key in identifying priorities and the resources and actions necessary for achieving them. Arlington residents, for example, have expressed a desire for quality economic development that both meets their needs and expectations as well as complement and enhance the quality of life for their neighborhoods. The City has

created new commercial design standards and established the One Start Development Center to improve development processes.

**Objective 2** Seize opportunities citywide in neighborhoods where challenges have presented themselves. By doing so, neighborhoods can increase ownership and capacity. Examples include a crime, traffic safety, or a code problem which result in a partnership between neighbors in developing a solution.

**Objective 3** seeks to celebrate the rich diversity of Arlington neighborhoods and the arts and culture, which are a product of that diversity. Events such as library programming, local art and theater

groups, community, school, and faith-based festivals and celebrations provide that opportunity. These events, supported by community partnerships, are essential to growing Arlington's economic, social and cultural vitality.



## Building Strong Neighborhoods

**The Build-a-Dream Scholarship Program** offers scholarships to income-eligible families for a child to be able to participate in youth programs.

**The Arlington Tomorrow Foundation** awards grants for a broad array of public purposes that improve the well-being of residents or make lasting enhancements to the City.

**Neighborhood Matching Grants Program** provides neighborhood organizations the opportunity to implement public projects.